

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTONJR/EB:JKATZ
APPROVED BY THE ACTING SECRETARY
S:HCOLLUMS
S/S RGAMBLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 292126 TOSEC 310340

EXDIS, FOR SECRETARY FROM ROBINSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A)

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: JORDANIAN/SYRIAN CIVIL AIR
NEGOTIATIONS AND ISRAELI REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL LANDING
RIGHTS (S/S NO.7624614)

1. FOLLOWING UP ON YOUR DISCUSSION WITH THE PRESIDENT ABOUT
THE JORDANIAN/SYRIAN CIVIL AIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH US, NEA AND
EB HAVE PREPARED A MEMORANDUM FOR ME TO SEND TO THE PRESI-
DENT REQUESTING HIS AUTHORIZATION TO INFORM THE CAB OF
HIS DECISION TO AGREE FOR FOREIGN POLICY REASONS
TO THE COMPROMISE PROPOSAL FOR TWO WEEKLY NONSTOP, WIDE-
BODIED FLIGHTS BETWEEN AMMAN/DAMASCUS AND NEW YORK. BEFORE
FORWARDING THE MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT, WE NEED YOUR
GUIDANCE ON WHAT WE SAY IN THE MEMORANDUM WITH RESPECT
TO ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL U.S. LANDING RIGHTS.

2. I UNDERSTAND YOU INDICATED TO THE PRESIDENT THAT YOU
FELT WE SHOULD ACCEDE TO ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR AN ADDI-
TIONAL GATEWAY AT MIAMI IF WE APPROVED THE JORDANIAN/
SYRIAN ROUTE. I AGREE FULLY THAT APPROVAL OF THE JORDANIAN/

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SYRIAN ROUTE WILL LEAD TO RENEWED ISRAELI PRESSURE FOR

LANDING RIGHTS IN ADDITION TO THEIR PRESENT RIGHT TO LAND AT NEW YORK. BEFORE MAKING A DECISION TO ACCEDE TO THE ISRAELI REQUEST, HOWEVER, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FACTORS I

BELIEVE WE NEED TO CONSIDER, HAVING TO DO WITH THE CONSEQUENCES THAT SUCH AN ADDITIONAL ROUTE GRANT WOULD HAVE ON U.S. WORLDWIDE AVIATION INTERESTS. THE AVIATION POLICY CASE AGAINST ACCEDING TO THE ISRAELI REQUEST FOLLOWS:

(A) EL AL HAS OUTEARNED TWA FOR MANY YEARS (IN 1975 BY A THREE-TO-ONE MARGIN) AND ADDITIONAL RIGHTS FOR EL AL WILL EXACERBATE THIS IMBALANCE. MOREOVER, DESPITE A RECENT RELAXATION, ISRAEL STILL RESTRICTS CHARTER FLIGHTS BY U.S. AIRLINES FROM THE EAST COAST TO PROTECT EL AL. THE CAB IS STRONGLY OPPOSED, AS I AM SURE DOT WOULD BE ALSO. IN THE PARTICULAR CASE OF LANDING RIGHTS AT MIAMI, PAN AM AND NATIONAL AIRLINES WILL JOIN TWA IN STRONG OPPOSITION. BLUNTLY, IT WILL BE VIEWED BY OUR AVIATION INDUSTRY AS A POLITICALLY MOTIVATED GIVE-AWAY WITHOUT ANY ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION.

(B) THERE IS A VERY STRONG LIKELIHOOD, MOREOVER, THAT GRANTING THE ISRAELI REQUEST WILL LEAD TO A CHAIN REACTION. NOT ONLY WILL WE THEN HAVE TO GIVE THE SAUDIS THE SAME FAVORABLE TREATMENT (THEY ARE ALSO SEEKING AN AIRLINE ROUTE), BUT BELGIUM (WHICH HAS LONG COMPLAINED THAT IT IS THE ONLY NATO COUNTRY WITH ONLY ONE LANDING POINT IN THE U.S.) WILL DEMAND A POLITICAL FAVOR. THE BELGIAN AND ISRAELI CASES ARE SIMILAR IN THAT EACH HAS LONG SOUGHT A SECOND LANDING POINT IN THE U.S. AND, IN EACH CASE, THE FOREIGN AIRLINE SIGNIFICANTLY OUTEARNS THE U.S. AIRLINE. IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHERE THIS CHAIN REACTION MIGHT STOP, SINCE THERE ARE MANY COUNTRIES SEEKING ADDITIONAL OR NEW ROUTE RIGHTS FROM US (E.G., JAPAN, SINGAPORE, INDONESIA, PHILIPPINES, SENEGAL, IVORY COAST, FINLAND).

(C) THE DOMESTIC REPERCUSSIONS OF GRANTING LIMITED AVIATION RIGHTS TO SYRIA AND JORDAN ARE PROBABLY
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MANAGEABLE, BUT THE REPERCUSSIONS FROM INDUSTRY AND CONGRESS ARE LIKELY TO BE SEVERE IF WE GRANT ISRAEL, AND THEN BELGIUM AND OTHERS, ADDITIONAL RIGHTS FOR ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL REASONS. MOREOVER, SUCH A COURSE HARDLY SEEMS CONSISTENT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT POLICY OF THE U.S. APPROVED JUST THREE MONTHS AGO BY THE PRESIDENT. WE WOULD BE OPENING OURSELVES TO CHARGES THAT WE ARE NOT SUPPORTING AN ECONOMICALLY VIABLE

INTERNATIONAL ROUTE STRUCTURE AND THAT, WHERE ROUTES ARE ESTABLISHED FOR NATIONAL INTEREST REASONS, THE GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN PRIVATE COMPANIES SHOULD SUBSIDIZE THE COSTS.

(D) A FURTHER FACTOR LOOMING IN THE BACKGROUND IS THAT WE ARE ALREADY UNDER STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE UK (AS WELL AS FROM JAPAN AND ITALY) TO CONCLUDE NEW AVIATION AGREEMENTS IN WHICH 50-50 RESULTS FOR THE AIRLINES OF EACH SIDE WOULD BE ENFORCED. ALLOWING ISRAEL, BELGIUM AND OTHERS TO INCREASE THEIR ALREADY DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE OF BILATERAL AIRLINE EARNINGS SEEMS INDEFENSIBLE WHEN WE MAY WELL BE FORCED TO REDUCE OUR AIRLINE SHARES WITH MAJOR AVIATION COUNTRIES.

3. BEFORE CONSIDERING A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN U.S. AVIATION POLICY TO ACCOMMODATE THE ISRAELI REQUEST, I SUGGEST THAT WE TELL THE ISRAELIS THAT WE ARE NOT OBLIGATED TO MAKE A CONCESSION TO THEM TO BALANCE OUR GRANT TO ARAB COUNTRIES OF AVIATION RIGHTS WHICH ISRAEL HAS LONG ENJOYED.

4. THERE IS SOME URGENCY ABOUT PROCEEDING WITH THE JORDANIAN/SYRIAN NEGOTIATIONS. WHEN THOSE NEGOTIATIONS WERE RECESSED, WE UNDERTOOK TO RESUME THEM IF POSSIBLE BY THIS WEEK AND BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE EXPECTING TO HEAR FROM US MOMENTARILY. AS YOU KNOW BOTH KING HUSSEIN AND PRESIDENT ASAD HAVE TAKEN A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE EXPEDITIOUS AND SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. IN THE JORDANIAN CASE, THERE IS THE ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION THAT TENTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS THEY HAVE MADE WITH BOEING TO LEASE 747S ARE FACING AN EARLY DECEMBER
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DEADLINE AND DEPEND ON WHETHER OR NOT THE JORDANIAN/ SYRIAN ROUTE IS APPROVED.

5. RECOMMENDATION:

THAT I FORWARD THE MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT (A) RECOMMENDING THAT HE APPROVE OUR PROCEEDING TO CONCLUDE THE JORDANIAN/SYRIAN NEGOTIATIONS ON THE BASIS OF THE COMPROMISE PROPOSAL YOU AGREED TO, (B) POINTING OUT THAT THIS WILL GENERATE PRESSURE FROM ISRAEL FOR ADDITIONAL LANDING RIGHTS, AND (C) STATING THAT WE MAY NEED TO SUBMIT A SUBSEQUENT RECOMMENDATION TO HIM ON THE ISRAELI REQUEST.

APPROVE ----- DISAPPROVE-----

ALTERNATIVELY, THAT WE HOLD UP THE MEMORANDUM TO THE
PRESIDENT ON THE JORDANIAN/SYRIAN NEGOTIATIONS PENDING
YOUR RETURN SO THAT WE MAY DISCUSS FURTHER WITH YOU HOW
TO RESPOND TO THE ISRAELI REQUEST.

APPROVE ----- DISAPPROVE -----

6. DRAFTED: NEA:ALATHERTON,JR/EB:JKATZ

APPROVED: THE ACTING SECRETARY

CLEARANCES: S:HCOLLUMS, S/S:RGAMBLE ROBINSON

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